

Radio Mutiny Reception Tips

West Philadelphia Pirate Radio - WPPR 91.3 fm

So, you're wondering if you can get Radio Mutiny? We have been heard: As far in the northwest as lower Merion and the west river drive just before Germantown, on Delaware Avenue to the east, up near the Torresdale El in the northeast Halfway across the Betsy Ross bridge, in Springfield and Yeadon to the west, on the highway outside the airport in the south. One particularly ambitious listener picked us up with a directional antenna in Oak Lynn, New Jersey.

Unlike larger stations, our radio reception is "line of sight." We broadcast with a mere 20 watts, while they use tens of thousands of watts. One difference is that we broadcast in mono, while they generally broadcast in stereo. Broadcasting in stereo requires twice as much power. Other stations rely on their signal bouncing off of stuff (brick walls, etc.) and into your house. Our signal has one shot- if your antenna "sees" our antenna, you'll probably hear us fine - if it doesn't, it's just a question of luck. Here are a few suggestions:

1) car radios do better - even crappy car stereos are often better at receiving weak signals than home equipment.

2) our antenna is vertical. It will probably help if yours is too. This gives the electromagnetic waves that we are pumping out more of an opportunity to induce a voltage in your antenna, which will be decoded by your radio and amplified for your listening pleasure.

3) If your stereo has no antenna, make one. From the hardware store get 8 feet of 12 or 14 gauge (multiple strand) copper wire with vinyl coating. Strip one inch off the end of this with a utility knife, removing the coating and connect this to the FM antenna connection on your radio. Extend the wire up your wall, play around with the placement of the wire and your reception. Be aggressive and move it around. Try both vertical and horizontal angles.

4) You may notice that your reception depends upon where you are standing in the room with the radio. This is because your body can interfere with radio waves. As with all kinds of waves when radio waves meet an obstruction, they are either adsorbed by the barrier, reflected off of the barrier, or manage to pass through it. In actuality, some of each almost always occurs. Your body is made mostly of water, and water is a pretty good absorber of radio waves if you are standing in the way of our signal, you will probably interfere a little bit. If the path to your antenna is clear for WPPR's waves, and you are standing in the way between another station's waves and the antenna, Radio Mutiny will probably sound better. Holding the antenna might affect it too. If you have better things to

do besides standing around, holding your antenna in order to receive our pearls of wisdom, you might try a big pot of water instead. Experiment with its placement to shield your antenna from the evil giant waves of the other stations and expose the antenna to the nice, perky little waves from Radio Mutiny.

5) For the hardcore radio addict - an antenna on your roof will give you a much better shot for receiving our signal. A directional antenna will make reception very likely, if you are within our range and there are no giant buildings directly between you and West Philly.

6) If you don't catch us try a few times. Occasionally, we are shut down during our broadcast time because a dj was unable to make their shift. We are having technical problems, etc. You may have just caught us at a bad time.

It might all seem a little involved to you - you're right. But if you catch us, I guarantee that you'll be listening to programming like you've never heard on the radio before. You'll love us, you'll hate us, you'll find us exciting and boring, sometimes phenomenally skillful and other times amateurish- but we are never bland and robotic like most of the radio stations in town.



Radio Mutiny press conference and demonstration after having been served notice by the FCC to cease broadcasting. The demo/press conference was broadcast live via a pirate radio transmitter. December 1 1997, Ben Franklin Court, Philadelphia, PA